Texas inquiry halted by U.S. intervention

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WASHINGTON — The Justice Department intervened to stop an investigation of President Kennedy's assasination by the Texas Attorney General's Office, files released by the FBI Wednesday said.

A memo written by Asst. FBI Director Cartha D. DeLoach Dec. 6, 1963, said Asst. Atty. Gen. Nicholas Katzenbach had asked Texas Atty. Gen. Waggoner Carr and Leon Jaworski, who had been named special counsel to the state investigation, to halt their effort.

Carr agreed to withdraw his plans at least until the federal investigation was complete. They were never revived.

At the time, he was considering running for re-election in 1964.

The memo, released by the FBI as part of its massive file on the presidential assasination, does not make clear FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover's objection to the state investigation. However, other documents indicate he was reluctant to share the FBI's investigative domain with any group — including a special presidential commission.

Carr told The Times Herald late Wednesday that he "combined efforts" with the federal government and the Warren Commision because the Texas inquiry did not have the authority or the credibility of a federal investigation.

"Leon Jaworski and I went to Washington and we went to Katzenbach's office," Carr said.

"As I recall Katzenbach was trying to get us an audience with Chief Justice (Earl) Warren, who had just been appointed to what later became the Warren Commission. He was not able to do it because Warren refused to see us unless I, as attorney general of Texas,

See JFK DEATH on Page 18

JFK death probe in Texas aborted

Continued from Page One

would agree to drop any investigation in Texas of the case.

"I must assume he felt they could do a better job in Washington," Carr said. He said he did not think Warren feared that a Texas investigation would uncover things the federal government wanted kept quiet.

"I told him I was not going to give up under any circumstances my right to investigate."

Finally, Carr said, after he threatened to hold an "open public investigation," Warren agreed to meet with him.

"We met in Warren's office at the Supreme Court and worked out an arrangement between the federal government and Texas so we could work together on an investigation.

"At the time it seemed to me to be the right thing to do," Carr said. " I still think the Warren Commission was the best thing."

Carr said in the immediate days after the president's death the national and international press accused Texas of being responsible for the assassination.

"Since we (Texas) were under suspicion by the world, it made sense to me that we should join the federal investigation," Carr said. "Texas could only lead a very limited investigation. We needed federal subpoena powers to go into Mexico and Russia."

Carr said all the evidence available at the time of the investigation showed "(Lee Harvey) Oswald was the assassin and that he acted alone.

"I've seen no evidence since then to indicate otherwise," Carr said. "But, of course, the door is not closed."

Another report in the FBI files said Katzenbach told the agency Carr "would like very much" to see Hoover on Dec. 6 and noted that the Texan had polital plans.

Carr said Wednesday he never met with Hoover concerning the Kennedy investigation.

The second report, a memo from DeLoach to Hoover's top aide, John Mohr, said, "Carr had no particular motive in mind other than to indicate to the press later on that he had discussed matters with the director.

"I told him (Katzenbach) I could see no percentage in the director's seeing Carr, that we were the investigative agency and that Carr's dealings should be with the department and the Presidential Commission," DeLoach continued.

He said Katzenbach told him "the President (Johnson) was most anxious to be given attention in Washington inasmuch as Carr was running for office next year.

"I told Katzenbach I knew this. However, I still felt that the director should not be injected into this matter," DeLoach wrote.

Katzenbach then agreed to attempt to persuade Carr not to try to see Hoover but DeLoach went ahead to recommend a perfunctory meeting.

At the end of the memo Hoover scrawled, "If he calls, I will see him."